UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Investigation of:	*	
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PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY	*	
SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT	*	Docket No. DCA-10-MP-008
SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA	*	
	*	

Interview of: OSCAR MARTINEZ

Anaheim Room
Marriott Hotel
San Francisco Airport
1800 Bayshore Highway
Burlingame, California 94010

Thursday,
September 16, 2010

The above-captioned matter convened, pursuant to notice, at 12:01 p.m.

BEFORE: KARL GUNTHER
Accident Investigator

APPEARANCES:

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I N D E X

I N T E R V I E W

(12:01 p.m.)

MR. GUNTHER: On the record.

I'm Karl Gunther. We're investigating an accident that occurred on September 9th, 2010, in San Bruno, California. It's our accident number DCA-10-MP-008.

Again, I'll say on the record that you're allowed to have anyone with you that you would -- wish to have represent or assist you in this interview.

INTERVIEW OF OSCAR MARTINEZ

BY MR. GUNTHER:

Q. Have you chosen a representative?

A. I have.

Q. Okay.

MR. JAQUES: Dane Jaques and I'm here on behalf of the witness.

Q. Could you please give your name, address, and phone number for the record?

A. Oscar Martinez. My address is [redacted] The phone number is [redacted]

Q. Okay. And who do you -- who are you affiliated with?

A. Pacific Gas & Electric.

Q. And what is your job title and function?

A. I'm a gas control technician. I work out of Hollister, also Milpitas Terminal -- Milpitas District, I should say.

Q. Okay. All right. What I'd like you to do is on September 9th, to start from the beginning and just give me a narrative of what you did.

A. My normal workday is 6:00 to 4:30. I came in that morning, we tailboarded. I was handed a work request from my temporary supervisor, Dave Boyd, pertaining to the work that we had to do in the yard. I went out, took care of this work request. And then I sat in some operator qualification training for a good part of the day. And that took -- that went up to about 1:00 p.m., I believe.

And then about the time I went out, I saw Pete Beck out there working, trying to figure out how to use and get power to the analyzer buildings. I had been working on that the day before and told them there was no power at those light towers. They weren't working.

So then we proceeded to try to figure out how we were going to get power to them. And to my -- and I told him from the day before that I was working on them, and that I noticed that the breakers for those analyzer buildings were labeled on a different panel and that we were -- actually, we were given the job to -- Allow me back up a little bit.

We were given the task of switching off the power off of the UDP panel in the control room. And they -- and we thought that the power supplies to the analyzers went to the UDP panel. But they were actually -- the analyzer building's were another panel. And I brought that to the attention of Pete and John Groppetti.

And that's when we determined that the power supply to the chromatograph that was on the UDP panel was actually the brains of the chromatograph. So we didn't have to run two temporary power supplies out to those analyzer buildings.

So we came back in and started looking at how -- where the wiring came into the brains for the chromatograph. We figured out which breaker was feeding it, what alarms we were going to get off of it. Of course, we were going to get ~~lots~~ lost of AC of the Daniels chromatographs.

We sat there -- John and myself -- and kind of had a punch list of the steps -- well, John had this punch list of how we were going to do everything. And we determined that we were going to do the chromatograph first, the Genius block second, then the three breakers that feed the comm building. Then there was the six-breaker for the power strip.

So we kind of laid it out. We had steps on which one we were going to do first and we kind of figured it out. My suggestion was when we were going to change the power strip one The for the controller, and would that we put everything in manual, record all of ~~the power~~ -- ~~all of~~ the settings for the pressures, because occasionally if you lose power to them, they can go stupid and lose their programming.

So we recorded everything that we needed for, I think, 21 or 24 controllers that are out. Their And then -- then, so, we started with the chromatograph. Actually, I took the clearance ~~off~~ out -- I took the clearance out with Gas Control, ~~that~~ then I ~~we~~ had called Gas Control

and told them that we were going to do the chromatograph. We laid out the process and what steps we were going to follow through all of the termination of the panel.

And I was going to keep them communicated with every step of the way as we took one off and put the other one on To put them on temporary UPSs.

So they were okay with it. I went to the Daniels computer, logged on, called ~~to~~ up the chromatograph -- the incoming, and the mixer chromatograph. I ~~went to the~~ Halted the Chromatograph and then -- we got the UPS plugged in and ready. We got our pigtails all ready for it.

In between, we had to figure out exactly which wire terminal was coming from the breaker, so we had to lift the floor up. And, you know, basically pull and tug on the wires to figure out which one coming through the wire -- the wire trays -- and kind of figure out where it came out to verify.

So after we traced them all out, ~~to make~~ we made sure that we were on the correct one, we had the pigtail ready. I terminated the breaker to the chromatograph, put a man-on-line tag on it. Pete lifted the wires to the chromatograph, landed the new pigtails in there. We plugged it into UPS, taped the ends up on the old wire, and the chromatograph was back up running. I had to go back into the computer and acknowledge the alarms, clear it, make sure that everything was back and operational. And, pretty much, that was the transfer of the chromatograph. So that was step one.

We called Gas Control and let them know that we were done

with step one and that we were going to proceed with the Genius blocks.

My concern was on the Genius blocks, I didn't know if we'd lose anything. So I had John Groppetti contact Mark Kazimirsky to get input what would happen if we lost AC for any length of time on the Genius blocks.

And Mark gave us his input. Well, ~~the~~ at first -- I guess, first, we got his voice mail ~~that~~ then he called right back and he gave us guidance on what we needed to do.

So we went ahead and traced out the wire out -- coming out to the Genius block power supply, I believe it was. We got the UPS sitting there. We got it prepped and ready, plugged in with an extension cord. We had a pigtail ready for it. We terminated the AC breaker, put a "man-on-line" tag on it. Pete lifted the wires on it, taped them up, put the pigtail on there, and plugged it into the temporary UPS.

And about that time I got a call -- well, before we plugged it into the UPS, we got -- I got a call from Gas Control, wanting to know how much longer, because ~~it had~~ -- ~~they had~~ -- when you put the controllers in manual, it locks the last set point that the controllers were at. So we were at 50 percent and locked in that value. And they wanted to know how much longer, and I told them that we were just about ready to power back up.

So, at that time, we powered it back up. Everything came back normal. And we put the controllers back in auto. We checked the settings on them and made sure nothing changed, and put them back

in auto.

The next phase --

MR. JAQUES: Hang on. Can you give the times that these occurred -- rough times of the day as you go through?

MR. MARTINEZ: I would say the chromatograph one would have been -- I think the clearance, it was approximately 3:05, 3:10, right around there. So I'm guessing the chromatograph would have been right around 3:30, 3:40. The Genius block would have been approximately closer to 3:50, 4:00, I imagine right around there.

The next step was to the comm. We had three breakers for the comm panels. So we went out there. There's, I think, eight plugs that we had to transfer onto a power strip, so we had the UPS sitting there, plugged into another outlet. We put the power strip in there so that we could -- it would be accessible to all of the cables so that they'd reach to it.

So ~~if~~ then we got everything ready for it, call up Gas Control that we were going to lose everything on communication, because it was, you know, all going through the comm line. And it was pretty short on that one. I went ahead and powered down all three breakers, put "man-on-line" tags on there.

We went back into the comm room and the three of us transferred the outlet plugs onto the power strip. Everything came back up and running, as planned. So that was pretty much -- It the five breakers had been transferred onto temporary UPSs at that time.

The last breaker we had was breaker No. 14. That was

fed -- the power strip, we thought for the controllers there -- the electronic controllers, the 353s. And those controllers had already been swapped out into temporary UPSs prior to this job -- to September 9th. So we thought it was basically going to be a power-down, pull the terminals out, plug it back in and plug it into the temporary UPS.

So, we didn't think it was going to affect anything. I killed the AC, threw a "man-on-line" tag on it, walked into the controller room and about that time I saw that we lost all data on all of the controllers.

And I can't remember what I said. I think I said, "Oh, crap," or something of that sort. And about that time, I told Pete to put the pigtail back -- take the pigtail back off, that he was trying to transfer over, and get that power breaker back on.

Gas Control called and they said that their regulators were failing in the open and wanted to know if I could verify that. I told them I was flying blind there, because I had lost all indication of pressure and controller status on the 353s.

And they wanted -- they requested me to verify -- I don't recall which one it was, but a couple of the meter tubes to see the status of the regulators. So I proceeded out to the platform out there with a flashlight. The pit doors were already open. I shined the flashlight in there and verified that the load trimmer valve on both those tube runs and they were opened.

I suggested that we lower -- their concern was that the

San Jose DFM was getting close to -- I believe it was a high alarm. I suggested that we lower the monitors back down to the regulator pressure. And Barry agreed. So I proceed on over to monitor five and monitor six and lowered those monitor set points.

At that point I was waiting for more directions on what he wanted me to do. I advised him to look downstream to see what else needed to be done. He requested me to verify the set point of -- I believe it's monitor 62. And I opened the cabinet and gave him the set point of the monitor. And he requested me to check the position of valve 63, and I indicated that it was in the open position. And he requested me to close that valve.

So I went down into the pit and manually closed it. And left it in manual.

And then about that time, he requested me to ~~pick up~~ Check pressure -- a downstream pressure read on valve 49, and I believe that's one that leads on line 132. I grabbed the gauge out of my truck, put it on the downstream side. I gave him the pressure read ~~and at that time I --~~ I that was all he requested of me and went back inside to ~~work on trying to~~ see where the -- Pete and Ed, the apprentice, the John Groppetti ~~were~~ They were on, trying to figure out ~~whether~~ ~~they got~~ How to get the power back, and they hadn't.

So then we continue working on that, trying to troubleshoot it. Come to find out, later on, that it was the power supply -- the 24-volt power supply that we had lost after pulling out numerous drawings and tracing it. We had 24 volts on one side of the diode.

On the other side of the diode, we had zero -- or very low voltage, not enough to supply the pressure transmitters and the controllers.

At -- and John suggested take a read across the diode. And when we took a read across the diode -- or Pete did -- and the 24 volt power supply came back on.

And everything started working again.

And about that time, it's was 9:00, and that's pretty much -- when Mark Kazimirsky showed up about that time.

BY MR. GUNTHER:

Q. Okay. Let's see, a couple of things. You said the San Jose DFM, could you define what that is?

A. The -- it's -- actually, it's the Distribution Feeder Mains. I think they said it was Tully Station was getting close to high alarm.

Q. Okay.

A. And I believe that's the one he said it was.

Q. Yeah, this is the one that would be at amps four.

Let's get a little bit of your credentials, your education, training from PG&E, what -- you know.

A. I've been an employee with PG&E for 26 years. I started at the power plants. I worked there for 10 years. I went into gas supply at Kettleman Compressor Station as a maintenance assistant. I stayed there for about a year and a half. I went to Milpitas District as an operator mechanic. I progressed -- at that time, we did not have apprenticeships. We had operator -- skill blocks. We had skill

blocks. And, basically, you -- you could go as fast as you can, as long as you pass all of your tests. And the criteria is basically like an apprenticeship. You had all of the bookwork. You had to have so many OJT hours on everything.

So when I was at Milpitas, I proceeded up to an operating mechanic one. I got the position back at Hollister as an operator mechanic. I reported to Hollister and continued through my training and became an operator mechanic two. And then I became a transmission mechanic -- journeyman transmission mechanic.

At that time, I worked with Mr. Gary Overman for years, as I was going through my training -- as I was trying to go into the technical field of it, going for a gas control tech.

I became a transmission mechanic one, I believe.

I held all of my operator qualifications from -- I believe it's 2000/2001, but I did not make journeyman control tech until 2006. There was other things going on at that time in my life.

So I finally made journeyman in 2006 and I've been a journeyman since then.

Q. Do you have a high school diploma or any college work?

A. No. I went to a junior college, but just a high school diploma.

Q. And are you qualified under the OQ program?

A. I am.

MR. GUNTHER: Sunil? Or Ravi from NTSB?

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. I want to fast forward with most of my questions, because -- I apologize, I had to take a phone call.

My name is Ravi Chhatre. I'm the investigator in charge of this accident. I work with the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington, D.C. and my title is NTSB Accident Investigator.

A. Okay.

Q. I want to ask you a couple of questions really based on previous testimony. And I remember you mentioning something about word is coming back from --

A. What?

Q. The word that came back from 57 volt to 54 volt, as I walked in.

A. Yeah, I think you walked in when the parcel probably had come back. We had -- we had lost a power supply, the 24-volt power supply. There's two of them. And there's a diode in between them. And a diode is -- so we were checking on one side of the diode. We had the 24 volts on the other side of the diode. We had -- I believe it was zero or up to two volts. It was a real low voltage.

We thought we had a direct ground somewhere. And so we were troubleshooting and John Groppetti asked Pete to check the voltage across the diodes. And about that time when he went across the diode, the 24-volt supply came back on.

Q. So were you -- was the drop in voltage for both -- used both part supplies or only one or how was that?

A. Across both -- both power supplies were down.

Q. I wasn't familiar that there were two.

A. Yeah, there's two parallel grounds.

Q. And do we know -- I guess what I was familiar with, and I know that you are familiar with the same thing, that something was done and the wire -- or the power supply came back.

A. The power supply.

Q. Did you run that or did you decide to take any further action to diagnose the problem? I mean, losing an RC is a problem that really is not diagnosed. The problem is solved. But nobody seems to know what caused it.

A. That's correct. We discussed it there. That's about as far as it went, because after that I was relieved of my duty. So I haven't really followed up on it. But, yes, it still needs to be addressed. And it should go to engineering. I would think that it's probably somewhere in the --

Q. Now --

MR. JAQUES: I'm sorry, he didn't finish his answer.

MR. MARTINEZ: I -- I have a feeling it's the diode itself. A diode is a one-way valve. It should only allow power one way and not the other way. So, basically, it's a check valve, so that's where I would think that's where I would look.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Okay. After the power came back, you know, you had to leave at some time. I mean, how long -- did you have a meeting with anybody? Did you discuss with anybody about that we solved the problem, but

we haven't diagnosed the problem? That it should be done? It should not be done? Was there any formal documentation made to actually show that -- I don't understand the process. That's what I'm asking.

A. Well, normally the process would be that you would probably put in a work request, saying that there is -- a material failure report that there is something -- there's something going on with the controls or the power supply itself. And that would involve -- and mark it up as a priority, because it definitely is a priority. And get engineering in there to take a look at this.

Q. And who would make that request? I mean who would prepare that work request?

A. Normally the work request would be put on by the division personnel. A material failure report would probably be by the personnel, also, myself, and, you know, expedited on up to engineering.

Q. And who besides you can make the work request?

A. I believe anybody could put in a material failure report in.

Q. And who else -- who else was aware with you at that time -- and you were talking about it, is that true?

A. Who -- the individuals that were there was myself, Pete Beck, John Groppetti, Ed De La Torres, I believe, and Mark ~~Esmersque~~ Kazimirsky (ph.) showed up approximately around 9:00.

Q. Okay. So after 9:00, 9:00 p.m.?

A. Yes. And then Dave Boyd, my acting supervisor, showed up.

And I don't recall what time that was.

Q. And what time did you leave?

A. I didn't leave until 6:00 in the morning.

Q. Now, during that course of time, or during that informal meeting, was there any discussion that who would do the -- who would actually do that work request? I mean that a work request should be filed?

A. No.

Q. My last question: In your long service at PG&E, have you seen any situation like this? I do not know, again, how many different locations you have been out of.

MR. JAQUES: I've got to object. What do you mean by "a situation like this"?

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Where the two -- I guess two power supplies or three, and one fails, and you can tweak the wires and it comes back without knowing why or what caused it.

MR. JAQUES: Has that happened before?

MR. MARTINEZ: I've had power supplies fail before. But never where they fail and they come back in -- back on.

MR. CHHATRE: Okay. Thank you very much. I appreciate your time and my apologies for leaving.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Sunil?

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. Mr. Martinez, my name is Sunil Shori with the California

Public Utilities Commission. Thank you for coming in for your testimony.

I just want to clarify a couple of things. As far as the OQ program, you were asked earlier that you had the OQ permit, you were qualified, but can you tell us the specific covered tasks that you're qualified for? I haven't seen your records, so, you know, short of that --

A. There's numerous tasks. I mean, I don't have one printed. I hold quite -- actually quite a bit of operator qualifications, because I came up from the bottom up and not just the technician qualifications. So I hold mechanic -- everything from valve maintenance to controls to SCADA -- numerous of them. So I've held numerous tasks.

I believe there's something like 20 to 24 of them I hold.

MR. JAQUES: And those records have been produced to the NTSB.

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. And with you and previous witnesses we've heard a couple of different things. And I just want to clarify that we're talking about the same thing.

The power strip, power supply, is that the same item?

A. No.

Q. So the diode that you were referring to, can you -- can you indicate so that I can now understand what are the differences? What's two different things we're talking about with a power strip

or just power supply?

A. A power strip is just a strip of outlets that you -- you know, you can plug in a regular receptacle into.

Q. Okay.

A. An electrical receptacle into.

A power supply is -- you know, it's normally fed through AC current and it's -- you know, it's a 24-volt power supply. So it generates a 24-volt power supply off of it.

Q. And then you also talked about that there's a -- and, forgive me, I haven't seen the power supply aspect of it. But is that dial -- what is the purpose of the dial that you referred to earlier?

A. Do you mean the diode?

Q. Yes. I don't know if he said "dial" or "diode."

You need to clarify.

A. A diode is basically -- it's basically like a check valve. They're directional. It only lets electrical current go one direction. So, obviously, a diode on a power supply would not be allowing the current to come back from the power supply going out to feed its 24-volt power supply and not allow any power to come back in.

Q. It's a gate valve?

A. Basically. It's a one-way direction power path.

Q. Okay. And when I asked earlier in terms of your previous experience with the kind of failure that you had on the power -- and to make sure on a power supply, we had a failure. You said you had that before, but once it happened, it's just -- it's gone. There's

no coming back?

A. When you start -- power supplies, I mean they're set up for 24 volts, normally. Normally, we go out there. We check the battery voltage. Most power supplies are just keeping a battery voltage afloat. We keep them afloat at approximately 27.6 volts. You know, you go out there, you check them monthly, you adjust them. You know, they're at our stations -- you know, like our remote location stations. And just make sure that they're holding their voltage.

Occasionally, you'll see a power supply that won't feed the 27.6 volts to the batteries any more and it's -- you know, they just start wearing out. They can't keep the voltage up any more. And then you just end up replacing them and put a new one in there.

MR. SHORI: I think that's it for my questions right now.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Pete, your time is up.

BY MR. KATCHMAR:

Q. I think it's almost good afternoon now.

Oscar -- Mr. Martinez, my name is Peter Katchmar. I'm with the U.S. DOT, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration. We regulate pipelines and oversee the State and things like that.

But, anyway, I just have a couple of questions.

When you say that -- you were talking after the first four things that you did, you said something about the -- you put the 21 or 24 controllers in manual and recorded the pressures?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you do that?

A. I did.

Q. Okay. And then -- and then you said you called Gas Control and told them that you were going to do the power strip now, so that they were going to lose telemetry -- they couldn't see the pressures any more?

A. They -- the plan was I took the -- I checked every controller John wrote down as I was reading them, because you had to toggle through the controller to get to the display for it.

John wrote down the pressure that it was holding and the set -- and the pressure set point as I read it off to him. And he wrote it down.

And can you rephrase what other --

Q. Okay. Did you have to go out to the field, to the controller itself, or did you do this from inside somewhere?

A. The controllers are inside there in the control building, right where we were all working. It's -- there's a wall in between the two, where the power -- we were terminating on one room, the backside of the control room, and the controller fronts are on the other side of the wall. So it's just walking through a door and coming through the front side.

Q. Okay. So you didn't physically go out to the actual valve --

A. No.

Q. -- the control valve. Oh, all right. Can you explain how you put them from --

A. From auto to manual?

Q. Yes.

A. It's just basically toggle through the switches. You know, I mean, you've got -- normally it's in auto control, basically gas control has remote set point capability on there.

Q. Right.

A. So, basically, you put it from remote to local. Then you switch the other button to manual, so that there's no way that gas control can change anything. And it locks into set -- the current setting of where it was at. So the valve won't move or operate. Just in case you lose power, you have the capability -- if -- if you lose power, it has the capability of sometimes losing its programming.

So I wanted to make sure that it didn't get that flutter that all of the sudden caused the valve to go wide open.

Q. Okay.

A. It's a precaution.

Q. This is different from what I thought I was told earlier -- or we were told earlier. So let me understand this.

Is there a way you can go to a valve and manually lock it into a manual position?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. That is not what you did?

A. No.

Q. Okay. So you only did it electronically?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. All right. So, I guess my next question would be if that's the case, then what if you lost power to those controllers where you set it electronically, would that cause the valve to go open? I mean, you took it away from San Francisco.

A. It -- go ahead.

Q. The control setting. You took the -- you know, by pushing the button, you set it manually in the electronic controller, or whatever.

A. Okay.

Q. What would happen if you lost power there?

A. Well, if you lost power, they were already on UPSs. So you shouldn't -- they shouldn't have lost. They were already on temporary UPSs.

Q. Okay.

A. So by right --

Q. So they were only on local control, though?

A. They were on local control, just in case something else happened.

Q. Good point.

A. So, basically, they were already on temporary UPSs.

Q. Okay, good. All right. I just thought it was more of a physical thing than -- you know, I thought you moved it from automatic to manual.

A. No, you can go to each valve and put them in manual, but you're going to a different pit. I mean, it would take forever.

Q. It would take you a lot more time. Okay.

And then you said you called gas control every time you did that, each time you did that?

A. I believe I did, on each step before we took each one out.

Q. Okay. Is there any record of those? Did you do it by telephone?

A. By telephone.

Q. Instant message?

A. No, it was all done by telephone. It's a recorded conversation. So I imagine --

Q. They are recorded?

A. I believe.

Q. Great. Thank you for that.

You said that you got on the floor -- you got on the floor and you tugged on wires to make sure which ones -- you know, and I know what you're talking about there.

But then you said something about "gas control called." I was just writing down.

A. Well, they didn't call when we were lifting the wire -- they called when we had the controllers in manual, when we were doing the switch over. Because it locks in those regulators -- at the time that they were regulating at 20 percent, 30 percent, whatever it was called at that time. When I put it in manual, it's going to hold that setting.

Q. Okay.

A. And they wanted to know how much longer it was going to be. I -- and I think I just told them that we were working as quickly as we could around to energize the equipment. And that, you know, we'd have it on as soon as possible.

Q. Okay. Then you said that you -- somebody told you to go out and check the pressure downstream of valve 49?

A. Yes.

Q. When was that, do you know?

A. After we had --

Q. The time? I mean, you know, sometime after 5:00, or sometime after 6:00, or sometime after 7:00? Just to the best of your recollection.

A. You know -- I'm -- to the best of my knowledge, I believe it was some time after 5:00.

Q. And you didn't mention, what was the pressure that you recorded there?

A. I don't recall.

Q. Oh, you don't recall. Okay.

Did you -- did you call somebody and tell them what that was?

A. I was on the phone conversation the whole time when I was doing all of this. I never hung up the phone when I was with operations.

Q. Okay. Good, then, hopefully, it's on the recording.

So you said the station was back nominal at 9:00 p.m.?

A. Approximately 9:00 p.m.

Q. Approximately 9:00 p.m. Okay.

And you said you were relieved of duty. And then I think you were asked when did you leave. And I think those were two different times?

A. There was an attorney that came in and basically touched bases with me. He wanted to know what went on --

MR. JAQUES: Stop. Whatever discussions you had with an attorney, you can't discuss today.

BY MR. KATCHMAR:

Q. Okay. But somebody told you you can't do any more work, or something, and what time was that? To the best of your recollection.

A. 4:30 -- 4:30, 5:00.

Q. In the evening?

A. In the morning.

Q. Oh, in the morning. The next day?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So you worked all through the night, doing your job, trying to do whatever -- but then around 4:30 in the morning, they said you need to go home?

A. I was drug tested. They brought somebody in to drug test all of us.

Q. Okay.

A. At that time, I was -- gas control wanted me to lower some monitor set points into the peninsula lines. I had been relieved of my duties at that time, so I was not able -- unable to go out and do

it. Rob Wagner was brought in, who's a gas control technician from Los Medanos who had been working with me there at Milpitas Terminal. He and I went out there and Rob lowered the monitor set points to the ones that gas control wanted lowered.

Q. Okay.

A. I should say he lowered them. I held the flashlight.

Q. Okay. What was that guy's name?

A. Rob Wagner.

Q. R-o-b?

A. Yeah, Robert, and Wagner.

Q. And when -- when do you think that was, approximately?

A. Late 4:00 a.m. -- early -- I think it was late 4:00 a.m.

Q. Okay. And then -- and then you mentioned that you left the site around 6:00 a.m.?

A. Yes. Pretty much everybody, I mean, had left around 5:15, 5:30. I had time cards to fill out.

MR. KATCHMAR: Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I'm done.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Bob? IBEW?

MS. MAZZANTI: Debbie Mazzanti, IBEW 1245.

BY MS. MAZZANTI:

Q. You were asked about the diode and whether or not you fixed that diode. And I believe the guestion was, "Did you report it to anyone?" Under a normal circumstance, if there -- with a diode, if you had not been relieved and it wasn't a crisis, would you

immediately -- would you be doing something to let someone know that the diode needed work?

A. I would have definitely followed up. Even if it came back on, I would have followed up, got a hold of engineering and try to figure out what we needed to do to correct this problem.

Q. So, that didn't happen because there was a crisis going on and you were being pulled off to do something else, is that correct?

A. It didn't get done because I got pulled off and I was basically sent home until pending my drug test.

MS. MAZZANTI: No further questions.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. City of San Bruno?

Okay. Follow-up, Sunil?

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. Mr. Martinez, you referred to "programming can be lost." And this was in the process of the switch over you were talking about. Can you elaborate a little more on what item you were talking about, where that programming can be lost?

A. AC spikes can actually affect, where the controllers will lose. I'm not an expert in it, but -- it's not my field, but I've seen it where AC spikes, a lot of times they will make the controllers lose their programming. And we did lose the programming on three controllers there.

Q. And you jumped my question, but, so on this particular case, is that something you could -- who was reguired to re-program those

once that program is lost?

A. Normally, I would. My laptop only has a program for the 352 Moore controllers. These are 353 controllers, so I did not have the programming, the software for them. Mark Kazimirsky suggested that we bring Wayne Fong in from engineering. He came in, and actually had to get technical support from Moore to clear the problem that was in them.

So I probably would not have been able to do it by myself, whether I had the software or not.

Q. Can you repeat who was brought in?

A. Wayne Fong. Wayne, W-a-y-n-e, Fong, F-o-n-g.

MR. FASSETT: Just to clarify, and "Moore" is the manufacturer?

MR. MARTINEZ: Yes, Siemens. They're Moore 353, but they're Siemens.

MR. FASSETT: Siemens.

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. So you had the programming for which ones, I'm sorry? 352, but not 353?

A. Correct.

Q. Why wouldn't you have -- and is that something that -- why wouldn't you have that?

A. I'm the technician out of Hollister District. And in Hollister, all we have is Moore 352s. Milpitas has 353s at their terminal there. And, basically, I've been brought up to fill in until

they get the replacement of the retirees.

Q. But my understanding is that you were the local tech. I think that's been referred to by folks. So by "local tech," what is your scope of coverage, I guess? When you say you were brought in from Hollister?

A. I normally work Hollister District. I've been relieving for Milpitas District until -- they're interviewing for positions, or trying to fill the position for the retiree there. So, basically, I've been filling in, coming in for Hollister and Milpitas, assisting at Milpitas Terminal or Milpitas District, I should say.

Q. Okay.

MR. FASSETT: Point of clarification, you say you don't know, sometimes they could lose their programming. Isn't it accurate to say that they're designed not to?

MR. MARTINEZ: I would ~~sit there and say, yeah~~ say, they're designed not to.

MR. FASSETT: Thank you.

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. But in this particular case, they did?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. How often, in your experience, does that happen, that these things have to be reprogrammed?

A. In my career, I've probably seen only three other ones, that I know of in Hollister District. But, I mean, you've got to remember Milpitas, there's a bank of controllers. Hollister, you

know, you might have three controllers at Hollister Station versus Milpitas, you have 24 of them. So, I mean, the number of controllers -- electronic controllers that you have in Milpitas is a lot greater than what you have at Hollister District.

Q. And you may have stated this before, and I missed it, but at what point does it become aware that they've lost their programming?

A. Well, these were pretty -- to lose their programming or lose their power supply? Can you clarify?

Q. Well, the controllers that have to be reprogrammed that we've been discussing.

A. Okay.

Q. At what point was it apparent to you that they had lost their programming?

A. When it said "fail" on the control panel. And those were the only three that never came back up. And you try to power through the display and it flashes "fail" on you.

Q. At what time would that be the case?

A. Well, we got everything back up and running at approximately around 9:00, and those three were still not showing anything.

Q. But, so, prior to that -- would there have been any indication to you that -- that those particular ones had lost programming?

A. Well, they were flashing "fail," but I didn't know whether they had lost it. Those three did show a "fail," but I didn't know they had lost their programming until we got the 24-volt power back

on.

Q. I'm sorry -- at what point did that flashing that you're referring to, that showed "fail," when did that start? I mean, so, basically, I guess, I'm trying to understand at the end of it, when you went to put them back in, they didn't come up. But when did that flashing or when did that other indicator of those three come to you?

A. I don't recall ~~they were~~ -- if they flashed "fail" from the time we lost the 24-volt power supply to that. To my knowledge the 3 Controlers were Flashing ~~-- but I do know~~ after we got everything back up and running, But ~~because~~ I was kind of scrambling out in the yard.

Q. And where would that be? Where that flashing would have occurred versus where you were working?

A. On the control -- on the controller front plate.

Q. Just more specific to my question, the proximity. So, basically, where that indicator would have been versus where you folks were working.

A. There's a wall dividing it. So -- and when you've got to go through a door and go to the back of them. We were working on the backside of them.

MR. JAQUES: Why don't you explain where those displays are compared to the mimic board, so that they understand the location?

MR. MARTINEZ: Where the mimic board is, the controllers are right below it and the -- and the LCD read-out is right on there.

BY MR. SHORI:

Q. And, again, you've jumped to the next question for me.

So, what -- the mimic board itself is just a visual display. It doesn't have any controls, from what I understand. Am I correct in that?

A. Correct.

Q. Okay. So, earlier someone had indicated that you checked the mimic board. So it that --

A. No, to my knowledge, I don't think the mimic board -- at one time when it was manned by operations, it used to be kept up. I don't believe it's kept up, so you cannot rely on it. We use it for a schematic and that's all.

Q. Okay. So when somebody says you checked the mimic board, what would have been the purpose of going to that, then? Or going to the mimic board?

A. If I went to go check the mimic board, probably to check which monitor was on which tube run. Or what valves were on what tube run versus on what monitor. Because it's kind of a -- just basically a diagram of the yard. Not every valve in the yard, but the important valves.

MR. SHORI: Okay. That's it for me. Thank you.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Ravi?

MR. CHHATRE: Yes.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. When were you guys doing that diagnostic work for the power supplies and when did the power come back on? When did you start and when did those supplies start producing work, approximately?

A. I would say somewhere in between from 5:00 until about 8:45, right around there, approximately.

Q. At 8:45, the supplies started producing electrical work again?

A. I believe -- you know, it was closer to 9:00. The only reason I know is Mark Kazimirsky showed up at 9:00. He showed up right after we got the power back up.

Q. So close to 9:00, 8:45 to 9:00.

And these diodes you are talking about, are they available to each of these local units -- compressor stations -- or you had to go and get those from some place? Do you have an office there, for supplies at the location?

A. You know, diodes are sized to what you're using them for, but I'm sure that's not just an off-the-shelf diode. You probably have to order it, to my knowledge. I'm not 100 percent sure.

Q. So you have supplies for these, are they stored somewhere in the vicinity or did you have to go outside the unit to order them?

A. I don't have any diodes for it.

Q. And how difficult it is to replace a diode?

A. It's pretty simple, I imagine. It's pretty simple.

MR. FASSETT: Just to clarify: But that wouldn't be your job, correct?

MR. MARTINEZ: I don't --

MR. FASSETT: Would that be Pete's job?

MR. MARTINEZ: It depends on whether the scope of the work

was given to Pete.

MR. FASSETT: Okay.

BY MR. CHHATRE:

Q. Now, if a diode were to be available there, could you have replaced it quickly? The reason I ask you is because I think earlier it was said it was difficult to reach the diode.

A. We had the diodes, we could have changed them.

Q. Okay. If the diode was available?

A. That's -- I mean, that's to say -- I'm not 100 percent that's what it is. But if it's not --

Q. I understand. I understand.

So between 8:45 and 4:00, you were still on duty?

A. At what time?

Q. Between 8:45 p.m., when you finished your job, and the time that you were relieved from the duty, which was around -- you say around 4:00 -- between 4:00 and 5:00, your status would be still on duty?

A. Yes.

Q. So I'm going to go back to that question again, during that period, there was no discussion about the work request made? At 8:45, you finished the job and you were relieved of the duty within a short time?

A. No.

Q. You had plenty of time to discuss that or not enough?

A. I was being interviewed.

MR. CHHATRE: That's all my notes say. Thank you very much. Now I know the situation with the diode and stuff.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. PG&E?

MR. FASSETT: No questions.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Anybody else have any more operations questions?

MR. CHHATRE: I have a question as to -- when does PG&E would plan to replace a new colored diagnostic on those units. Do you have something planned or are you still losing a board?

MR. JAQUES: Are we off the record? That's not a question you're directing to the witness. Are we off the record?

MR. CHHATRE: Let's go off the record.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

MR. GUNTHER: All right. Pete?

BY MR. KATCHMAR:

Q. Pete Katchmar with DOT, again, Oscar.

When -- when the 24-volt -- when you guys figured out that the 24-volt wasn't working, did all of the red LCDs there under the mimic board go into flash -- failed or something?

A. No, they weren't all flashing. Most of them had bogus reads on there, you know, bogus numbers on there. There was no pressure indication.

Q. Is that what that 24-volt fed?

A. The 24-volts feed the 24-volts for all of the pressure

transducers and the 24-volts supply to the -- to the analogs, I believe, the analog inputs -- the digital inputs.

Q. Okay. But all of those would be off --

A. Yes.

Q. -- or giving bogus readings or whatever?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And then, I guess what you said was after -- excuse me, after you fixed that and you were getting 24-volts again, everything came back on but the three --

A. Controllers.

Q. -- controllers. Is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And -- all right.

Can you explain to me about this programming? I understand somewhat about the PLCs. Those are programmable logic controllers. How is that different from this programming that you're talking about for a controller?

A. The PLCs is the brain network that ties everything together. It sends it off to gas control, also. Where the controller, it's -- each controller is tied to one specific valve. So, basically, the controller -- I would say it's almost a slave to the genius box.

Q. Okay. But, now, I guess my question is what programming is there that was lost? Can you try to explain that?

A. Each controller to each specific valve has its own specific programming that was set up by engineering. You know, the torque

of the valve, depending on what size the valve is, how long it takes that valve to operate from a full open to a full close position. There's numerous things that's involved in that programming. I'm not a subject matter expert on that part of it, though.

Q. Okay. Okay. So, is it, then, that -- let's go back to where you may be. The 352 valves that you work on, that you have the programming in your --

A. Controllers? You mean the controllers?

Q. Yeah, I'm sorry. What did I say?

A. Valves.

Q. Controllers. You work on the 352s and you said you have the programming for those. Is the programming for each of these valves identical for each valve?

A. No.

Q. Okay. So you're saying that you have the programming for the three or four or five or however many valves you've got in Hollister, you have the -- each of the valves for each of those -- separate valves?

A. I have the programming for all of the 352 controllers in Hollister on my lap -- well, actually, on my flash drive.

Q. Okay.

A. And my laptop, also.

I have loaded all Milpitas controllers -- other programming for each one of those valves on my flash drive, also. It wasn't until -- I was going to attempt to do it -- actually,

until -- I wasn't sure where to pick up the program for the 353s. And that's when Mark Kazimirsky suggested we bring in Wayne Fong.

Q. Okay. So, again -- I'm going to ask you again, and I apologize, because I'm just not clear. Each valve has its own unique number?

A. Yes.

Q. And then it has its own unique programming?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. So is there -- could you -- and I'm not accusing you, but could you -- could you put the wrong programming -- like the programming for a different valve on a different valve? Is there a way to do that?

A. Yes.

Q. What keeps you from doing that?

A. I mean, the -- the -- I would say that the file that you execute, that you have to upload to the controller, it's designated either -- you know, if you're working on 17-R, it's specified 17-R. Or if it's for valve 17, it's specified valve 17.

MR. FASSETT: May I suggest that this is, perhaps, a better question for Mark Kazimirsky, the supervising engineer, who will be here tomorrow?

MR. KATCHMAR: Okay, good. Good.

BY MR. KATCHMAR:

Q. Is there anything that we have not asked you here today that you think we need to know about?

A. To my knowledge, you've pretty much hit on everything.

Q. Okay, great. Just to let you know, you are going to be able -- you're going to see all of your testimony, obviously. But you're going to have our names and numbers.

A. Okay.

Q. If, in the future, next week, next month -- whatever -- you think of something that you think we need to know about, you're welcome to talk to any one of us.

A. Okay.

Q. And we'll get the information to the others.

A. Okay.

Q. All right. I appreciate that.

MR. CHHATRE: Let me clarify for the record, that the primary source should be the operations group here (ph.). And I will follow-up from that. It is true that you can call anybody to follow the protocol, that should be the first person to try. And if you can't call him, then you can call any other person.

MR. MARTINEZ: Okay.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Did anyone else have any more operations questions? Okay. Rick, go ahead.

MR. NARVELL: Off the record.

(Off the record.)

(On the record.)

BY MR. NARVELL:

Q. Mr. Martinez, we had talked a little bit ago about your

being able to provide a 96-hour or four-day work/rest history, which would essentially have been from the 5th of September, Sunday, up to and including the time of the incident. Would you be able to provide that information to me off the record?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. We will get that in short order here.

Just generally, can you kind of characterize your overall health?

A. It's pretty good. No major health problems. I go to the gym in the morning. I mean, I try to take care of myself and -- I mean, no high blood pressure. It had been this week, I imagine.

Q. That's certainly understandable, sir. Yes.

Okay. Do you know the date of your last physical, approximately?

A. I just changed doctors, so I'm saying April.

Q. Of this year?

A. This year.

Q. Okay. Good.

And at the conclusion of that examination, did the doctor have any concerns or make note of anything?

A. [redacted], he said it was [redacted].

Q. Okay. All right.

At the time of this incident, were you taking any medications, prescription, over the counter?

A. He put me on over the counter -- I'm trying to think what

it's called. It's --

Q. What's it for?

A. It's for just [redacted]. It's basically just a vitamin -- it's a generic vitamin B. And he says it should help lower your cholesterol, because I'm just borderline, so.

Q. Okay. Now, would this have been at the time of your physical in April or thereabouts?

A. Yes. I mean, I've been taking it twice a day, once in the morning, once in the evening.

Q. And then do you know the name of this?

A. I'd have to go back to the hotel room and see what it is.

Q. Okay. And do you know what the dosage is off the top of your head?

A. I think it's [redacted].

Q. Is that twice a day?

A. Yes.

Q. So a [redacted]?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. But this is an over-the-counter?

A. Yes.

Q. Nothing -- are you taking any prescription medications, dietary supplements, et cetera?

A. Just vitamins, daily -- man vitamins that you're supposed to take.

Q. Is this a multi?

A. Multi.

Q. And that's once a day?

A. Yes. And Omega-3.

Q. And Omega-3. Okay. All right.

How about your vision, do you know what your vision rating is?

A. It's deteriorated more in the last five years, now that I'm 50. But it used to be 20/20, so it's -- [redacted]

[redacted].

Q. [redacted] how long?

A. I just got them three months ago, and that's just for reading.

Q. Okay. You don't use them for driving or for --

A. No.

Q. Okay. But just to clarify, here, when you say "deteriorated," it's nothing to the point where something would be very difficult to see on a normal day-to-day basis?

A. No.

Q. Okay. And the same question with respect to your hearing, any difficulties or problems with your hearing?

A. I haven't had a change. You know, we get our hearing test yearly and it hasn't had a -- what do they call it -- a [redacted], where it's recordable. So, you know, it's --

Q. Okay. You say it's every year. Is this something that's

PG&E-required?

A. Yes.

Q. So you get a physical every year?

A. I get a hearing test yearly.

Q. Oh, just hearing.

A. And I do get a physical every two years. I'm a DOT Class A driver.

Q. So do you have a CDL?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. So you undergo that process every two years?

A. Yes.

Q. Thanks for bringing that to my attention.

Do you exercise your CDL or do you just maintain it?

A. I maintain it and operate it, when required.

Q. Okay. When was your most recent DOT physical?

A. I think it's due again this year, the end of this year.

Q. So the last would have been '08, at some point, prior to --

A. I'm guessing it's been --

Q. If you don't know, that's fine.

A. -- a year and a half. I can pull out my license, if you need to know.

Q. No, not right now. Okay.

I'd like to get a general sense -- and, again, we'll go -- kind of shifting gears here to the day of the incident, last Thursday. Can you characterize your workload that day -- high,

normal, or low?

A. It was actually pretty low that day. Well, actually, the workload, the original schedule, would have been a heavy day. But the schedule got changed, because I was required to take three operator qualification tests, training. So they changed my schedule to do that work. So, basically, it was sitting there in the conference room and, you know, just review and, you know, take the tests later on.

Q. Okay. So is it still accurate, you mentioned -- when I just went down this line of questioning, that it was pretty low.

A. Yes.

Q. Is that still accurate?

A. Yes.

Q. And consistent with what the workload was that day?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. Thank you.

You were asked earlier about some equipment problems that -- and you brought that out and discussed that. Other than those that have already been discussed here today, was there any other problems, anomalies, with any of your equipment, whether it be electrical or mechanical or pneumatic or anything?

A. I know when we were troubleshooting, we were landing wires and there was an arcing wire that we fixed. It wasn't synched down all of the way down in the terminal. And I asked Pete Beck if he took care of it and he said that he did, that he addressed that.

Q. So, but as far as -- so that was another employee. Was anything -- with respect to your perspective on problems with equipment or processes or anything along those lines?

A. No.

Q. Other than what we've already discussed here today?

A. No.

Q. Okay. Anything that might have been of a distraction or preoccupation when you arrived to work that day, at Milpitas? For example, you know, maybe some adverse financial news, medical news, death in a family? As examples.

A. No.

Q. Okay. And I'll extend this to your co-workers, anything that you may have been aware of along these same lines here, of a potential distraction or preoccupation?

A. No, it was a pretty quiet week.

Q. Okay. All right.

The last area here for me, and I do have one operational-type question. I'll keep that one brief. Did you undergo post-accident drug and alcohol testing?

A. I did.

Q. Okay. Can you provide information as to approximate times and what you provided?

A. I'm guessing it was approximate 1:00 to 2:00 and I volunteered to be the first one, because I had to go to the bathroom pretty bad about that time.

Q. Okay. So can we safely assume that one was a urine specimen?

A. One was a urine specimen.

Q. Okay. And did you -- go ahead, I'm sorry.

A. Okay. The first one was a breath analysis. So I took a breath analysis.

Q. Okay. And have you learned the results of either or both of those tests?

A. Yes.

Q. And let's break them out here. What's the result of your breath analysis test?

A. The breath analysis was given right there and then and that was a zero-point-zero-zero. And the drug testing was negative.

Q. Okay. And you were informed of that when?

A. The breath analysis, I knew right there and then.

Q. That's immediate.

A. Right, that's immediate. And the urine -- the urine test didn't come back until Monday, is when they called me, or I had a message around 4:00. They told me they had good news and bad news, saying that I passed my test, but I had to come back to work.

Q. I see, okay. Have you returned to work since Monday?

A. I returned to work on Tuesday.

Q. Okay. And just for the record, here, on the day of the incident, any alcohol or illicit drug use on your part?

A. No.

Q. Okay. All right. Okay.

This is my last question and we're done with the human performance area. When did you first learn of the incident in San Bruno?

A. After I went back in -- after working with operations getting the lower -- checking those valve positions and lowering those two monitors, and checking the downstream pressure for them, I went back in -- well, before I went back in, I actually called my acting supervisor, who is my co-worker, and just let him know that we had lost power at the station -- we had lost the station, just to give him a heads-up. He goes, "Okay." He goes, "Well, just keep me updated and let me know what you find out."

I went back in there and we were troubleshooting, and I don't recall exactly what time it was, but Dave Boyd called me back up and he said, "Not to add to your problem, but there was a line rupture on line 132. They're requesting you to go up to Martin Station to help on valving the station out."

But he goes, "I do not want to pull you off the Milpitas Terminal at this moment. So I'm going to try to get a hold of Rob Wagner," that was at home, to see whether he could bring him in. So he wanted me to hold off before I reported back to Martin Station for the line rupture.

Q. Okay. Very good.

MR. NARVELL: Thank you. That concludes my area of questioning.

MR. GUNTHER: Does anybody else have any more questions?

BY MR. KATCHMAR:

Q. Can you please try to estimate that time that you were called?

A. From Dave Boyd?

Q. Yeah. I mean, just give me an hour or something.

A. I'm guessing 6:15, 6:20.

MR. KATCHMAR: Thank you.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Anybody else have any further questions? Would the witness like to make any statement for the record?

MR. MARTINEZ: No.

MR. GUNTHER: Okay. Thank you for your help and your cooperation. We do appreciate it.

MR. MARTINEZ: Okay. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF:	PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY SEPTEMBER 9, 2010 ACCIDENT SAN BRUNO, CALIFORNIA Interview of Oscar Martinez
DOCKET NUMBER:	DCA-10-MP-008
PLACE:	Burlingame, California
DATE:	September 16, 2010

was held according to the record, and that this is the original, complete, true and accurate transcript which has been compared to the recording accomplished at the hearing.

[redacted]
Richard Friant
Official Reporter